

**Town of Camden
Community & Economic Development Advisory Committee**

**Monday, June 13, 2011
Washington Street Conference Room**

Meeting Attendees and Notes

Attendees

CEDAC and liaison: Peter Gross, Don Abbott, Rick Bates, Jim Fullilove, Martin Cates, Lowry Sargent, Brian Hodges, Dick Householder

Public: Steve Wilson (Camden CEO), Linda Clancy (reporter), Stuart Smith

Notes:

1) Minutes of May 23, 2011 meeting were approved

2) Communities for Maine's Future grant

Brian provided an explanation of the grant and activities to date in relation to the grant Camden is hoping to submit. Stuart Smith provided background on plans to renovate his building at 12 Bay View St. and continuing its use as a movie theater. He described the historical uses of the building as well as plans to create three smaller theaters in the space, one with 80 or so seats and two smaller 45-seat cinemas. Stuart said in addition to offering movies, the theater would be used in conjunction with events such as PopTech! and the Camden Conference. The building would contain other commercial space as well. Estimated project costs are \$1.2-1.5 million, which includes replacing the antiquated projection system, installing an elevator, infrastructure, and façade improvements. He said the project is not economically feasible under the current scenario and that award of a \$400,000 CMF grant "may make it so." Stuart and his wife Marianne would provide the necessary matching funds.

The following motion was made and approved to support an application by the town to apply for a \$400,000 CMF grant:

Because we feel the renovation of the building at 12 Bay View Street will positively impact downtown Camden, including enhancing its vitality, expanding the downtown campus concept and providing educational benefits, CEDAC endorses the CMF (Communities for Maine's Future) grant application by the Town of Camden in the amount of \$400,000 and recommends that the Select Board support this project by approving this grant application.

Peter said he would present CEDAC's position on the grant application at the June 21 Select Board meeting (public hearing for the grant).

3) Historic Ordinance

Dick Householder described a proposed ordinance that the Planning Committee is developing to preserve, protect and enhance the appearance of buildings in designated historical areas of downtown. He explained that part of the appeal to having such an

ordinance on the books is that to be eligible for a CLG (Certified Local Government) grant, a town must have an historical preservation ordinance in place and a commission set up to monitor it. The ordinance would affect what owners can do to the exteriors of their buildings. Dick acknowledged some opposition from the Camden Downtown Business Group and said the town needed to balance those arguments against the need to protect and preserve the historic downtown. Dick asked CEDAC to support the ordinance. CEDAC agreed that it needed more information and public input before deciding whether to voice an opinion.

Public attendee and building owner Dave Dickey commented that the ordinance would be an economic disaster. He said the result would be empty storefronts and that because of modifications made over the years there was nothing historic about any of the downtown buildings. He asked to be put on the agenda at CEDAC's next meeting.

The Planning Committee will present current changes in the proposed ordinance at a public meeting on July 6.

4) Heart & Soul Planning Grant

Brian reported that he and Peter met with Jane LaFleur, who is urging the Town of Camden to apply for a grant from the Orton Family Foundation's Heart and Soul planning program for community development. The town match would be a total of \$100,000 with a minimum of \$25,000 in cash, the rest could be in kind or staff time. Brian suggested that the grant could be used for a number of projects, including (1) development of a downtown plan including such areas as pedestrian traffic flow, parking, etc., (2) marketing programs or (3) affordable/work force housing. The Orton grant is for a two-year effort, while the downtown plan is a more immediate need. Further discussion was tabled until the next meeting.

5) Review of CEDAC/REDAC meeting

Peter reported that members attending the last meeting agreed that Camden and Rockland must find a way to work together to market the towns regionally. Both must see that cooperative effort as a win/win. The question is how to accomplish the goal, including solutions for transportation issues over the long term.

6&7) There were no miscellaneous reports or public comment/questions offered.

8) Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 7:20.

NOTE: Next Meetings: June 27 and July 11